

Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Worksheet for Women

While a tremendous amount of progress has been made in cancer research, we still don't understand exactly what causes most cancers. However, we know of many factors that place us at higher risk for different cancers. Some of these factors are beyond our control, but there are others that we can do something about. And today we have tests that can help us detect some cancers in their earliest stages.

Below you will find helpful information on the most common cancers that can affect you as a woman. A checklist shows what can increase your risk, and a second list shows how you can lower this risk. The early detection column shows ways that you can detect cancer early, when it is most easily treated. The final column on each sheet allows for you to develop your own plan of action to help prevent or detect cancer.

It's important to know that some factors may place you at higher risk than others, and some actions may lower your risk more than others. Many cancers develop without any known factors present. For a more thorough explanation of cancer risk factors, visit our Cancer Reference Information section at www.cancer.org, or call us any time, day or night, at 1-800-ACS-2345. And if you have any risk factors or haven't had your early detection tests, please take this worksheet and discuss it with your doctor.

Cancer-Related Checkups

The American Cancer Society recommends that all women get cancer-related checkups as part of general health visits after age 20. This checkup should include health counseling and, depending on your age, might include looking for cancers of the skin, thyroid, mouth, lymph nodes, and ovaries, as well as for some diseases other than cancer.

Special tests for certain cancers are recommended as outlined below.

Lung Cancer

Risk Factors	Preventive Behaviors	Early Detection	Your Action Plan:
 □ Do you smoke tobacco? □ Have you or do you now work around asbestos? □ Are you or have you been exposed to radon? □ Have you been exposed to uranium, arsenic, or vinyl chloride in your workplace? □ Do you smoke marijuana? □ Are you or have you been regularly exposed to secondhand smoke? For more information on risk factors, read What Are the Risk Factors for Lung Cancer? on www.cancer.org. 	 □ Quit smoking □ Encourage those you live with or work with to quit □ Avoid areas where people are smoking around you □ Some people choose to contact their state's radon office or the US Environmental Protection Agency to learn about having their basements checked for radon For more information on preventive behaviors, read Can Lung Cancer Be Prevented? on www.cancer.org. 	No tests have been found to diagnose lung cancer early enough to made a difference in survival. Lung cancer is usually found on x-ray, and there are often no symptoms. For more information, read Can Lung Cancer Be Found Early? on www.cancer.org. If you have any of these risk factors: Talk to your doctor if you have any of the risk factors listed	Steps to Lower Your Risk (Prevention): Early Detection:

Colorectal Cancer

Risk Factors	Preventive Behaviors	Early Detection	Your Action Plan:
 □ Has anyone in your family had colon or rectal cancer? □ Do you have a colorectal cancer syndrome in your family, such as familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP) or hereditary nonpolyposis colon cancer (HNPCC)? □ Have you ever had colorectal cancer? □ Have you ever had a type of intestinal polyp called adenomatous polyp? □ Have you had chronic inflammatory bowel disease such as Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis for several years? □ Are you over 50 years of age? □ Do you eat a lot of red meat or luncheon meats? □ Are you overweight? □ Do you use tobacco? □ Do you average more than 1 alcoholic drink per day? For more information on risk factors, read What Are the Risk Factors for Colorectal Cancer? on www.cancer.org. 	□ Follow early detection guidelines to find and remove adenomatous polyps before they become cancer □ Get at least 30-45 minutes of physical activity on at least 5 days per week. For more information, read At a Glance—Nutrition and Physical Activities on www.cancer.org. □ Achieve and maintain a healthy weight □ Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grain foods, and limit foods high in saturated fat, like high-fat dairy products, processed meats, and red meats □ Quit smoking □ Cut back to not more than 1 alcoholic drink per day, if you drink at all For more information on preventive behaviors, read Can Colorectal Cancer Be Prevented? on www.cancer.org.	Beginning at age 50, you should follow one of the five early detection options below: Yearly take-home package for fecal occult blood test (FOBT), or fecal immunochemical test (FIT) Flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years Yearly FOBT or FIT plus flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years (Of the options above, the American Cancer Society prefers yearly FOBT or FIT combined with flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years) Double contrast barium enema every 5 years Colonoscopy every 10 years Talk to your doctor about testing earlier and/or more often if you have any of the following risk factors: Colorectal cancer or polyps in a parent, sibling, or child younger than 60 or in two such relatives of any age) Colorectal cancer syndromes in your family You have had colorectal cancer or adenomatous polyps You have or have had chronic inflammatory bowel disease for several years For more information on early detection, read Can Colorectal Cancer Be Found Early? on www.cancer.org.	Steps to Lower Your Risk (Prevention): Early detection:

Skin Cancer

Risk Factors	Preventive Behaviors	Early Detection	Your Action Plan:
 □ Do you or have you sunbathed? □ Do you use tanning beds or booths? □ Do you have fair skin with blonde or red hair? □ Do you sunburn easily or have many freckles? □ Did you have severe sunburns as a child? □ Do you have many or unusually shaped moles? □ Do you live in a southern climate or at a high altitude? □ Do you spend a lot of time outdoors (for work or recreation)? □ Have you ever received radiation treatment? □ Has anyone in your family had skin cancer? □ Do you have a weakened immune system due to an organ transplant, HIV infection, or another condition? □ Were you born with xeroderma pigmentosum (XP), basal cell nevus syndrome, or dysplastic nevus syndrome? □ Have you been exposed to any of these chemicals? ■ Arsenic ■ Radium ■ Coal tar ■ Paraffin For more information on risk factors, read What Are the Risk Factors for Melanoma? or What Are the Risk Factors for Melanoma? or What Are the Risk Factors for Nonmelanoma Skin Cancer? on www.cancer.org 	□ Stay out of the sun, especially between 10 AM and 4 PM □ Wear a broad-brimmed hat, a shirt, and sunglasses when out in the sun □ Use a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher, and reapplying it often □ Wear wrap-around sunglasses with at least 99% UV absorption, labeled as blocking UVA and UVB light; or "UV absorption to 400 nm," which means UVA and UVB protection □ Do not use tanning beds or sunlamps □ Protect young children from excess sun exposure □ Check your skin often for abnormal or changing areas, especially moles, and have them examined by your doctor For more information on preventive behaviors, read Can Melanoma Be Prevented? or Can Nonmelanoma Skin Cancer Be Prevented? on www.cancer.org	Regular Self exam: Become familiar with any moles, freckles, or other spots on your skin. Use mirrors or have a family member or close friend look at areas you can't see (ears, scalp, lower back). For more information on skin self-exam, read Skin Cancer Prevention and Early Detection on www.cancer.org. Check for skin changes once a month. Show any suspicious or changing areas to your doctor Cancer-Related Checkup (including skin exam) for people at high risk: Over 20: every 3 years Over 40: every year For more information on early detection, read Can Melanoma Be Found Early? or Can Nonmelanoma Skin Cancer Be Found Early? on www.cancer.org.	Steps to Lower Your Risk (Prevention): Early Detection:

Cervical Cancer

Risk Factors	Preventive Behaviors	Early Detection	Your Action Plan:
 □ Have you ever had sex? □ Have you ever been told that you had human papilloma virus (HPV)? □ Have you ever had genital warts? □ Do you smoke? □ Do you have human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection or AIDS? □ Did your mother take diethylstilbestrol (DES) when she was pregnant with you? For more information on risk factors, read What Are the Risk Factors for Cervical Cancer? on www.cancer.org. 	□ Reduce your risk of getting HPV by: ■ Having sex with only one other person who only has sex with you ■ Practicing safer sex by using condoms each time you have sex □ Quit smoking □ Have regular Pap tests For more information on preventive behaviors, read Can Cervical Cancer Be Prevented? on www.cancer.org.	 □ Yearly Pap test to begin about 3 years after you first have sex, or by age 21, whichever is earlier. The newer liquid-based Pap test can be done every 2 years □ After age 30, if you have had 3 normal test results in a row, you may be tested every 2-3 years with Pap or liquid Pap tests, or every 3 years with an HPV DNA test plus a Pap. For more information about HPV, read What Every Woman Should Know on www.cancer.org. □ If you are 70 years old or older, and have had 3 or more normal Pap tests in a row with no abnormal Pap tests in the past 10 years, you may choose to stop Pap testing □ If you have had a total hysterectomy, you may choose to stop Pap testing unless the surgery was for cancer Women at high risk: □ Women with poor immune function due to organ transplant, chemotherapy, steroid use, or HIV infection need yearly testing even after age 30 □ Women whose mothers took DES during pregnancy need yearly testing even after age 30 For more information on early detection, read Can Cervical Cancer Be Found Early? on www.cancer.org. 	Steps to Lower Your Risk (Prevention): Early Detection:

Breast Cancer

Risk Factors	Preventive Behaviors	Early Detection	Your Action Plan:
 □ Are you over age 40? □ Have you had breast cancer? □ Has anyone in your family had breast cancer (especially mother, sister, or daughter)? 	 □ Talk with your doctor about the risks and benefits of hormone replacement therapy for your specific situation □ Get at least 30 minutes of physical activity on 5 or more days a week. 	Age 20 – 39: ☐ Clinical breast examination (CBE) by health care professional every three years ☐ Be aware of what your breasts normally look and feel like, and promptly report any changes or new breast symptoms to your	Steps to Lower Your Risk (Prevention):
□ Have you had radiation to the chest as treatment for another cancer?	For more information on exercise, read At a Glance—Nutrition and	doctor. Breast self exam is an option	
☐ Did you have your first child after age 30 (or have no children)?	Physical Activities on www.cancer.org.	Age 40 and over: ☐ Yearly mammogram	
□ Did you begin menstruating before age 12, or go through menopause after age 50?	Achieve and maintain a healthy weightDecrease your alcohol intake to	☐ Yearly clinical breast examination by a health care professional, near the time of the mammogram	Early Detection:
☐ Have you been on hormone replacement therapy for more than 5 years?	no more than 1 drink per day Women at high risk:	Report any breast changes to your doctor or nurse. Breast self exam is an option	
 □ Do you average more than1 alcoholic drink per day? □ Are you physically inactive? □ If you are past menopause, have you gained weight, 	☐ Talk with your doctor about taking tamoxifen or ask about enrolling in a chemoprevention study.	For more information on breast self-exam, read How to Perform a Breast Self-Exam on www.cancer.org.	
especially around your waist? For more information on risk	For more information, read Tamoxifen and Raloxifene Questions and Answers on	Women at high risk: ☐ Talk with your doctor about starting earlier, and about the possible benefit of breast MRI or ultrasound in addition to mammograms and	
factors, read What Are the Risk Factors for Breast Cancer? on www.cancer.org.	www.cancer.org. For more information on preventive behaviors, read <u>Can Breast Cancer Be Prevented?</u> on www.cancer.org.	CBE. For more information, read Mammography and Other Breast Imaging Procedures on www.cancer.org.	
		For more information on early detection, read <u>Can Breast Cancer Be</u> <u>Found Early?</u> on <u>www.cancer.org</u> .	

Endometrial Cancer

Risk Factors	Preventive Behaviors	Early Detection	Your Action Plan:
 Does anyone in your family have hereditary nonpolyposis colorectal cancer (HNPCC), or are you at risk for this cancer? Are you over age 40? Did you begin menstruating before age 12, or go through menopause after age 50? Do you have a history of infertility or never giving birth? Are you obese (very overweight)? Do you eat a lot of animal fat? Do you have a history of diabetes? Have you taken tamoxifen or long-term estrogen replacement therapy without progesterone (if you still have your uterus)? Have you had breast or ovarian cancer? Have you had radiation therapy to your pelvis? For more information on risk factors, read What Are the Risk Factors for Endometrial Cancer? on www.cancer.org. 	□ Talk with your doctor about the risks and benefits of hormone therapy for your specific situation □ If you are taking hormone therapy and you still have your uterus, talk with your doctor about using estrogen with progestin rather than estrogen alone For more information on preventive behaviors, read Can Endometrial Cancer Be Prevented? on www.cancer.org.	□ Talk with your doctor, especially at the time of menopause, about the risks and symptoms of endometrial cancer □ Watch for and report any abnormal spotting or bleeding, or any bleeding after menopause, and report it to your doctor □ If you have or are at risk for HNPCC, consider yearly testing with endometrial biopsy beginning at age 35 For more information on early detection, read Can Endometrial Cancer Be Found Early? on www.cancer.org.	Steps to Lower Your Risk: Early Detection:

Ovarian Cancer

Risk Factors Preventive Behaviors	Early Detection	Your Action Plan:
Have you already gone through menopause? □ Did you begin menstruating before age 12, or go through menopause after age 50? □ Did you have your first child after age 30 (or have no children)? □ Has your mother, sister, or daughter had ovarian or breast cancer? □ Has one of your parents, siblings, or children had colorectal cancer? □ Have you had breast cancer? □ Have you been on estrogen replacement therapy for more than 10 years? For more information on risk factors, read What Are the Risk Factors for Ovarian Cancer? on www.cancer.org. Have you had breast cancer? Be Prevented? on www.cancer.org.	There are no effective and proven tests for early detection of ovarian cancer. For more information, read Can Ovarian Cancer Be Found Early? on www.cancer.org. Watching for and reporting signs and symptoms may allow earlier detection (although all of these can have other causes): Abdominal swelling Vaginal bleeding Back and/or leg pain Chronic stomach pain If your mother, sister, or daughter has had ovarian cancer or breast cancer, or if your parent, sibling, or child has had colorectal cancer, you are at high risk of ovarian cancer. If you have had breast cancer, you are also at high risk. You may want to talk to your doctor about: Pelvic exam	Your Action Plan: Steps to Lower Your Risk: Early Detection: